

Draft 2.0: March 3, 2010

PIONEER SQUARE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Goals and Strategies: Community Roles and Actions

Goal #1: Improve Public Safety and Civility

- Develop standards for social service agency responsibilities regarding clients outside their buildings and in the neighborhood
- Implement a program of private security funded by club owners to support a safe and health nightlife
- Assess the need for a community center for Pioneer Square; a place for people to go during the day

Goal #2: Improve the Built Environment in the Square

- Increase Residential Development and Density in Pioneer Square
 - Build relationships with property owners and developers
 - Convene key partners and facilitate advancement of major development opportunities,
 - Advocate for specific incentives needed to create more residential space in the neighborhood
- Address Vacant, Dilapidated, and Underused Buildings
 - Identify, inventory, and map neglected buildings. Use the building inventory done for the Livable South Downtown effort as a starting point
 - Develop targeted strategies for each dilapidated, neglected building in the Square
 - Engage property owners directly in efforts to improve the appearance, tenancy, and upkeep of the District
 - Activate storefront windows with art, fashion, and design displays, including working with the City's Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs on this initiative

Goal #3: Engage Businesses and Support Business Growth

- Research and inventory the businesses and nonprofit organizations located above the ground floors; understand "who is in Pioneer Square" and accurately characterize the economy
- Inventory existing businesses, and identify missing complementary uses
- Meet with businesses individually and in groups to engage them, solicit their needs for business retention and expansion
- Reach out to large companies and institutions outside Pioneer Square, to obtain their support and engagement
- Develop a system to track business activity – openings and closings

Goal #4: Marketing, Branding and Promotion

- Develop a comprehensive PR/Marketing/Communications plan with timelines and resources for implementation
 - Communicate the Square’s architecture as “one of the great historic districts in America;” create materials to illustrate the quality, scale, and value of the buildings
 - Consider partnering with organizations focused on historic preservation or architecture
 - Promote the District’s accessibility by transit
- Communicate Seattle’s cultural and historical heritage, including existing venues and events, such as the Square’s specialty walks, museums, historical plaques
- Build on the First Thursday Art Walk to attract more and new people to the Square
- Support the Trails to Treasure program
- Support existing and emerging economic clusters
 - Support existing clusters, such as art galleries, clubs, and independent retailers – and conduct outreach to attract additional businesses
 - Support efforts to expand the Square’s digital media and gaming cluster
- Work with other districts (ID, downtown and the waterfront) to coordinate messages about the future (post viaduct) and leverage resources
- Take advantage of free resources offered by the Mariners: half page ads in Mariners magazine, free tables in the concourse and pre-game video presentations
- Advocate for street vending carts in the Square. (Needs further discussion -- enforcement, cleaning and equity issues (BIA assessment). [Also, there is a community-based effort to begin a Saturday mobile food and craft market in Occidental Park.]

Goal #5: Organizational Development and Advocacy

- Establish organizational capacity, with adequate staff and funding and decision-making authority, to execute this business-oriented economic development agenda
- Address the mix of boundaries and overlaid zones – MID, BIA, PS Historic District, planning area, etc; Reevaluate the BIA boundaries
- Work with the National Park Service and support the agency’s efforts to have a great Ranger presence on the street
- Host forums and events to hear ideas and generate discussion in support of economic development in Pioneer Square.

Goals and Strategies: City Roles and Actions

Goal #1: Historic Preservation and Development Environment

Development and Adaptive Reuse Incentives

- Enact South Downtown zoning incentives that are adequate to help increase residential density
- Convene the development community to better understand potential incentives and barriers to residential development
- Use the City's tools and invest in incentives to help increase residential development
- Expedite development projects through the City's permitting process
- Engage property owners directly in efforts to improve the appearance, tenancy and upkeep of the District
- Explore whether the current housing levy could fund any improvements
- Explore the feasibility of vacating Washington Street (behind Occidental Park) to facilitate development of the block and expand the park out to allow housing

Building and Energy Code Provisions

- Develop performance-based energy code provisions for historic buildings, based on national models. (City's Green Building team is looking at this issue)
- Investigate the New Jersey rehabilitation building code for adaptive reuse
- Evaluate the St. Louis model of matching Federal tax breaks with State tax incentives

Goal #2: Infrastructure, Parking and Transportation

Parking

- Review the quantity and location of on-street parking spaces. Identify opportunities to free up spaces for shopping and visitor use
- Manage Sunday parking to free up short-term spaces for shoppers and visitors
- Formalize the informal "no sports games or special events on Art Walk Thursdays" rule

See Gordon Clower's Response: there is probably little awareness of any 1st Thursday overlap policies re: the sports teams. They limited ability to influence the team game scheduling which is done by Major League Baseball and M.L. Soccer. These leagues are at different experience levels with scheduling, obviously.

RE: Mariners, they do have games on the first Thursdays of May, June, August, and September. I'm pretty sure the M's reps would say they can't influence those dates, and would be a bit rattled by the prospect of us wanting to influence weekday evening game day scheduling. This is because we exert more attempted influence on roughly 6-9 afternoon games per year, where traffic/commute issues are very important.

Transportation

- Support the Executive's recommendation and funding to extend the streetcar line alignment through Pioneer Square
- Support mitigation of major construction projects in the Square

Utilities and Technology

- Take the lead in identifying and executing an investment strategy that delivers reliable broadband to Pioneer Square
- Engage with Comcast to provide improved broadband service
- Work with Seattle City Light to troubleshoot neighborhood issues. At a minimum, determine what expected service response times
- Ensure that lights that burn out are repaired timely; Consider installing brighter lights

Goal #3: Public Safety and Civility

Public Safety Experience and Perceptions

- Identify city actions and strategies to increase the perceptions of public safety in the District (more/reword)
- Effectively enforce existing City regulations – “enforcement of existing regulations lags actual regulatory levels” (can we give an example? It's not clear what is meant here. DON Preservation Board Staff have the ability to go after violations of historic preservation rules)
- Enact measures to improve public civility, such as proposals regarding aggressive panhandling
- Improve enforcement of noise ordinance at night, in particular between the hours of 12 pm and 3 am
- Continue to support programs that activate public space, such as Seattle Parks & Recreation's summer arts program in Occidental Park
- Continue to support and advance the memorandum of understanding for night clubs
- Conduct CPTED in areas of greatest need to deter drug dealing and other illegal activity

Human Services Programs and Strategies

- Convene the District's human service agencies and organize efforts to discuss current needs and issues, and develop a plan of action
- Develop standards for social service agency responsibilities regarding clients outside their buildings and in the neighborhood

Goal #4: Economic Development Support and Investment

- Align the City's business and economic development activities to support Pioneer Square's business climate and activity; provide staff and financial support for the initiatives in this Plan
- Support economic activity data collection efforts
- Experiment with getting information on new businesses from the business license database. The City could send out a notice when a new business license is received, as happens now with liquor licenses.
- Support identification of new and emerging clusters
- Help recruit complementary new businesses